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EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is with a sense of sincere regret that I write these last notes for the English Section of the Nur Afshan. The necessity of closing it, for the present at least, is solely due to the financial weakness of the paper. I may say, however, that I have had a conviction for a long time that the English Supplement of the Nur Afshan was not able to do the work really needed at the present time. The Urdu paper will continue to be published, and, we hope, it may be possible to improve it as a vernacular paper. For the English readers of India we need a monthly magazine edited and published as Christian organ in which not only the doctrines and claims of the Christian faith could be set forth, but in which the assumptions and erroneous teachings of Moslem and Arya and of anti-Christian publications generally could be exposed in a calm and sympathetic spirit. In such a magazine something like a free discussion of religious questions might be carried on, and sufficient space could be allotted for the purpose.

To make it a success there should be a large number of writers who could deal with the various questions from the standpoint of expert knowledge. We should like to have a general expression of opinion upon this subject. Letters should be addressed to Rev. E. M. Wherry, Woodstock Cottage, Mussoorie, U. P.

The mass of anti-Christian writing found in the Indian Press today would be appalling if it were not for the assurance that we have here an index of the influence which Christianity has made upon the minds of educated men. But

we must not for a moment suppose that no special effort is needed to rebut the statements of an anti-Christian Press. We need to be up and doing. The enemy has no new weapons. The arguments are usually based upon misconception of Christian belief. What a grand opportunity to set forth the truth.

The real difficulty is to secure a hearing, or a reading. The very men who are telling the people that Christianity is unworthy of their acceptance, that the Bible is a bundle of absurd stories too ridiculous to be believed, and that the Christian teaching cannot be compared with the pure wisdom of the Vedas, are nevertheless busy in preventing their hearers from reading the Christian books and papers! This attitude suggests a change of method of publication. Posters, handbills, tracts for free distribution should be issued by the millions, magazines for lengthy discussion of important questions should be placed in the libraries and reading rooms. Extensive advertisement of books should be resorted to.

Reading rooms should be established widely and every inducement given to those willing to read.

Suggestions along this line are desired and may be sent to the address already given.

The following extract from the *Civil and Military Gazette* will interest the Missionary community not a little:

"A judgement of the Panjab Chief Court has decided that according to Muhammadan law a wife's conversion from Islam to Christianity effects a complete dissolution of her existing marriage with her Muhammadan husband. This decision

involved some very knotty problems of Muhammadan law, and jurists are by no means agreed on the question. The last number of the Magazine which represents the views of the Ahmadiyya sect (which lately lost its founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) contains an article controverting the learned judges' decision. The problem is one which jurists alone can settle, but the main arguments of this writer are worth noting. He argues that the Quran prescribes no punishment for apostasy, and that the death penalty for apostasy was only adopted during a period of acute conflict, and that the punishment was inflicted, not for mere change of faith but for desertion to the enemy in time of war. Consequently women, who could not wage war against the faithful, were never executed for apostasy. The civil disability which apostasy involved included dissolution of marriage, as a consequence of the death penalty. If the apostate escaped death, it could only be by flight. Then he was assumed in law to be dead and his marriage was *ipso facto* dissolved, but it is argued, this law does not provide for cases where the apostate continues to live in the same country, and in any case does not apply to female apostates. On the other hand, if one civil disability, *viz.*, dissolution of marriage, is enforced against apostates, why should not the others, *viz.*, entire loss of property, be also enforced?"

The remark of the Mirza Sahib quoted above reminds one of the German's picture of a camel not as the camel is but as he ought to be. The Muslim law in this case does not depend upon the Quranic teaching but upon the traditions. The *qazies* seem to have a variety of decisions, all of which are, no doubt, bolstered up

by various traditions and fatwas of the learned. Some years since a Muslim woman became a Christian thinking she could thus secure a divorce from her husband but the Courts decided that she could not get her freedom on the ground that a Muslim could have a Christian wife. This judgement had the sanction of the example of Muhammad who had a Coptic Christian wife. The question of property rests not with Muslim law but with the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 which guarantees to all her Indian subjects religious liberty and assures them against loss of property by reason of a change of faith. It is a pity that such a question as the status of a Muslim woman who changed her faith cannot be determined without a process of law obliging much expense and resulting as in this case in a decision contrary to that of the Courts in another province in a similar case.

We rejoice with all law-abiding people in India in the passage of the two laws relating to Newspapers and Explosives. When men of intelligence were ready to condemn the use of bombs and when the masses were being educated to believe that the use of these murderous tools of the lawless anarchist was legitimate it was high time to interfere in the interests of peace and safety for the average man.

THE BUSY MAN.

BY W. H. WILLS.

If you want to get a favor done
By some obliging friend,
And want a promise, safe and sure,
On which you may depend,
Don't go to him who always has
Much leisure time to plan,
But if you want your favor done,
Just ask the busy man.

The man with leisure never has
A moment he can spare.
He's always "putting off" until
His friends are in despair.
But he whose every waking hour
Is crowded full of work
Forgets the art of wasting time—
He can not stop to shirk.

So when you want a favor done,
And want it right away,
Go to the man who constantly
Works thirty hours a day.
He'll find a moment, sure, somewhere,
That has no other use.
And fix you while the idle man
Is framing an excuse.

—New York Ledger.

New Zealand's "Wonderland"

If one can imagine a furious and active volcano with a crater a thousand miles in extent, sunk level with the earth and thinly covered with a screen of soil, one has some idea of the awe-inspiring "Wonderland" of New Zealand's North island. You can not poke a stick into the ground without starting a boiling spring; and wherever you turn the ground is fairly alive with geysers of boiling water—steam jets and blowholes, with quivering volcanoes and gurgling "mud-pots," all colored fantastically with rainbow hues, ranging from brilliant sapphire to vivid scarlet. Stranger still, the entire face of this region is constantly changing in shape and color, and there are hot springs here stretching in a continuous chain for three hundred miles. The ground throbs and quivers with volcanic activity, and set in the midst of it all are native Maori villages of surpassing interest. A strange race of magnificent savages, who, although they have been cannibals within the memory of man, are now a highly intelligent race, and actually send representatives to the Parliament in Wellington.

The native women, gorgeous in garments of crimson, green and purple, are forever puffing stolidly at big pipes and going hither and thither about their household work with the quaintest of babies slung across their backs. This reminds me that domestic work in this strange region is made light, indeed, for white housewives as well as the Maori women. Every garden and back yard has its hot water provided by nature.

And when these easy-going people grow hungry, the mother prepares a meat pudding or a joint, and drops it into a convenient pot of natural boiling water in the earth, and in a few minutes it is cooked. The same conveniences are still more in evidence on washing day. Stepping carefully through a tangle of boiling geysers and gurgling mud-pot, one suddenly comes upon a great collection of native women and girls doing their washing in a vast smoking lake big enough to have steamers on it.—W. G. Fitzgerald's "In the Land of Fire and Stream." in April St. Nicholas.

IDLENESS.

Idleness is contagious. The devil wants no better workshop than an idle brain. For one idle person will soon draw to himself others who would be busy but for the example and influence of the idler. If idleness injures ourselves alone, it would still be a thing to be avoided. But it ensnares others than ourselves. An incident told of Daniel Webster's boyhood illustrates this truth. His father found him and his older brother Ezekiel idling away their time. He approached the boys and said: "Ezekiel, what are you doing?" "Nothing," responded Ezekiel. Turning to Daniel, he asked: "What are you doing, Daniel?" "Helping Zeke," was the quick reply.

AN ARAB'S GIFT.

Once upon a time, so the story goes, there was a poor Arab who had traveled far amid the desert sands. Traveling he came to an oasis, which is often a pleasant place, with greenery and trees and flowing water. This particular oasis had in it a wonderful spring, and eagerly the Arab lay at full length by its side and drank from it just as boys will drink from a brook in summer. Never had he tasted such water. Then, when he had stood up again, he began to think it was rather selfish of him to enjoy such wonderful water all by himself. So he spoke aloud and said, "Even my master, the king, has never tasted such water. I will fill my water-bottle from the spring, and to my master I will carry it as a gift of love. He filled his water-bottle, and then away he started to run fast and far across the desert until his glad eyes saw the domed palace of the king, rising behind the white walls of a noble city. When the Arab reached the royal palace and saw the king, he bowed down to the ground and said, "God is great, God save the king." The king looked, and with bright face answered, "God is great, God save you, my son." Then the Arab stood forth before the king and said, "My lord, as I journeyed far across the desert I came to a sparkling stream, wherein was water the like of which few men have tasted. Bethinking myself of your majesty, I filled my water-bottle, and I have traveled these seven days to bring you my gift of love. Behold my present!" And the Arab held out his water-bottle.

The courtiers stared with amazement. But the king smiled gently, and said, "Let a gold cup be brought!" When the cup was in his hand he filled it from the water-bottle. The water was seven days old, and the Arab sighed to see it did not sparkle as when it came from the spring. But the king drank a huge draught of it, and then he said gravely to the Arab, "My son, I take this, the gift of your love, with great gladness, and I thank you for your great kindness. Go to the keeper of my treasury, and he shall give you gold coin for your goodness to me." The Arab bowed to the ground and withdrew. When he was gone one of the courtiers asked permission of the king and tasted what was left in the gold cup. Then he made a wry face. "My lord," he called out, "how could you drink this, after what you had at your meal? It is but poor, common water." Then the king smiled anew: "My son," he answered, "it was a gift and a gift of love; therefore did I receive it, and to me it was sweet." The courtier answered nothing, but he understood.

And do you, who read this story, also understand how love sweetens the gift? Our heavenly Father receives graciously our little, if our little is the expression of sincerest love. God will always take our gift if it is the best we have to give and we give it in love.—Selected.

Restoring the Waters of Babylon.

One of the oldest of Old World civilizations was that in Asiatic Turkey. Now arid enough, Babylonian Mesopotamia and the country between the Tigris and the mountains of Kurdistan were once the granaries of the world. The Chaldeans turned the country into a huge garden, studded with prosperous and populous cities.

Irrigation, a stupendous system of dikes and canals, was the means of bringing this about; when the works of the ancients ceased to be kept in repair the country sank back to arid waste again.

Now irrigation is once more to the fore in that part of the world, and a United States Consul at Bagdad—a "Yankee at the Court of Haroun-al-Raschid"—tells us there is a demand for a pumping plant. It is said, he writes, that Sir William Willcocks, the famous engineering and irrigation expert, desires to crown his distinguished career by bringing back these regions to cultivation, and has prepared schemes costing some £ 4,000,000 and £ 3,500,000, respectively.

"I find," writes the consul, "that a report made by him soon after he visited Bagdad some two or three years ago, has awakened an interest among local capitalists, and a demand has suddenly sprung up for pumping engines and irrigation machinery. The Turkish government has deposited with the Imperial Ottoman Bank a sum of 100,000 Turkish liras, equal to £ 80,000, which amount is to be expended in reclaiming certain lands on the Euphrates. The Euphrates used to follow the course shown on atlases until, some years ago, it ate out the bed of the Hindiyeh Canal; the Hindiyeh became the Euphrates, and the bed of the old river became dry for a couple of months of the year. The former bed of the Euphrates now carries very little water, and as a result the valuable rice lands about Hillah (ancient Babylon) have gone out of cultivation, and the still more valuable date gardens are rapidly dying out. This has caused the Turkish government to take action. A French irrigation engineer has been employed to improve matters, and he has prepared a scheme for a barrage across the Hindiyeh Canal, which will, when it is completed, divide the waters of the Euphrates between the Hindiyeh Canal and the old bed of the river."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

Believe me, the world is a mirror—it reflects back to you the face you present to it, and you get out of the world just what you put into it. If you do not sing out, can you get an echo?

A man may succeed in securing and harding other men's money by sharp turns in trade and far-reaching manipulations, but can such a man enter the kingdom of heaven? Aye, that's the rub.

THE STORY OF KHAKI.

Khaki, the olive-colored canvas cloth worn by soldiers in hot climates, owes its present use to a lucky accident, as is the case with many inventions. This cotton stuff has been worn in India by British troops for many years. Its tint was a greenish brown, but it always faded when it was washed with soap.

A business man from Manchester, while traveling in India, chanced to enter into conversation with an English officer, who remarked carelessly that the first manufacturer who could produce a cotton drill that would not fade would make his fortune.

The young Englishman never forgot this hint. He came home, found a skillful dyer, and with him began the search for an olive dye which, when used on cotton cloth, would not yield to soap or soda. They spent years in these experiments, all of which proved fruitless.

One day they found among several scraps of dyed cloth one which retained its color under the most severe tests. The puzzling fact was that it had been cut from the same piece of cloth and subject to the same process as the other scraps, all of which faded. The two experimenters were greatly perplexed, and for months tried in vain to solve the riddle. The one little fragment of khaki was the only one which kept its color against all attacks.

By chance, one day they found that the dye in which this scrap had been dipped had remained for a time in a metal dish of a peculiar kind. The secret was found. The metal of the dish, in combination with the chemicals of the dye, had furnished the one thing needful. They tried the experiment with other pieces. The dye held, and their fortunes were made.—*Chicago Record-Herald*.

AS IT WAS, IT IS NOW.

Great interest has been aroused in London by the finding at Thebes of the jewels of Set II. The Egyptologists of the British Museum, and others, have received confirmation of the discovery, and one of them says the finding of these jewels is another triumph for Theodore M. Davis, the American who is backing the excavations in the Valley of the Kings. The find is important because, though the actual mummy of the queen was not found, her bracelets of gold, her huge earrings, and her elaborately worked rings, with their accessories, will tell the story of her life. The dispatch says that this may disprove the claim that Rameses II was the Pharaoh of the Exodus and enthrone Seti II and his Queen as the Rulers with whom Moses talked. "We have noticed," says the "Christian Advocate," "that when such extraordinary finds are published to the world, a controversy soon arises as to their significance, but the number for the last few years acknowledged to be genuine by the consensus of experts has been large in proportion to the whole

number discovered by reputable persons. Jews in all ages have shown the most extraordinary adaptive facility. In every country where they are not absolutely crushed they outdo the original citizens in adaptation to the government under which they live, and they imitate their customs and especially their jewels. Isaiah denounced the women who wore 'tinking ornaments about their feet,' and 'the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels.'"

Faith is the sunshine light of to-day: hope is the sunset glow that anticipates a bright to-morrow.

"THIS TOO, SHALL PASS AWAY."

Once in Persia reigned a king
Who upon his signet-ring
Graved a maxim true and wise,
Which, if held before his eyes,
Gave him counsel at a glance,
Fit for every change and chance;
Solemn words, and these are they:
"Even this shall pass away."

Trains of camels through the sand
Brought him gems from Samarcand;
Fleets of galleys through the seas
Brought him pearls to match with these.
But he counted not his gain
Treasures of the mine or main;
"What is wealth?" the king would say:
"Even this shall pass away."

In the revels of his court,
At the zenith of the sport,
When the palms of all his guests
Burned with clapping at his jests,
He amid his figs and wine
Cried: "Oh, loving friend of mine,
Pleasure comes, but not to stay;
"Even this shall pass away."

Fighting on a furious field,
Once a javelin pierced his shield,
Soldiers, with a loud lament,
Bore him bleeding to his tent;
Groaning from his tortured side,
"Pain is hard to bear," he cried,
"But with patience, day by day,
"Even this shall pass away."

Towering in the public square,
Twenty cubits in the air,
Rose his statue carved in stone;
Then the king, disguised, unknown,
Stood before his sculptured name,
Musing meekly, "What is fame?
Fame is but a slow decay—
"Even this shall pass away."

Struck with palsy, sere and old,
Waiting at the gates of gold,
Said he, with his dying breath,
"Life is done, but what is death?"
Then, in answer to the king,
Fell a sunbeam on his ring,
Showing by a heavenly ray,
"Even this shall pass away."

—British.

TELEGRAMS.

London, June 18.

Reuter learns that the details of the Anglo-Russian Macedonian proposals have been practically settled, and as soon as the agreement is definite the two Governments will seek the adhesion of other Powers.

Reuter's agent at Teheran states that another band of four hundred Afghans with arms and two thousand camels, are reported to have left Minab on 9th June and are now half way between Bam and the Afghan border.

London, June 19.

Despatches from Chicago state that the Republican Convention has adopted Mr. Taft by 704 votes out of a total of 978. The nomination was then made unanimous. The roll call of States nominating other candidates was continuously interrupted till Ohio was reached, when Mr. Taft's name was received with twenty-five minutes of cheering, shouting through megaphones, and waving of flags bearing Mr. Taft's portrait.

Pennsylvania cast three votes for Mr. Roosevelt, although he had not been nominated.

The Chicago Convention has adopted a member of Congress, Mr. Sherman of New York, for the Vice-Presidency. He is the nominee of the Taft Party.

A telegram from Seoul states that a British subject named Bethell, has been sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment for publishing an alleged seditious article against the Japanese in a Korean vernacular paper.

Agra, June 19.

After several days of unbearable heat monsoon conditions have set in to-day. The weather is cloudy and a cool breeze is blowing with spasmodic showers of light rain.

London, June 21.

A telegram from Philadelphia says an explosion has taken place in the hold of the German steamer *Arcadia*, which was unloading in dock. The explosion is attributed to bombs placed by discharged employes from Hamburg. Remnants of bombs have been found. Three negro stevedores were killed and a score injured. The bulkheads were blown out.

London, June 20.

A telegram from Paris states that while expressing regret at the recent frontier incidents and thanking the French for their support in suppressing the rebellion, China has demanded an enquiry into the facts.

France is inclined to agree.

Mr. Taft in consequence of his nomination to the Presidency has resigned the Secretaryship for war. Mr. Luke Wright of Tennessee will succeed him.

Heavy storms have been experienced in France and great damage has been done to the crops.

The *Himalaya* which was detained at Port Said by a broken steam pipe has proceeded.

Agra, June, 20.

The long looked for monsoon arrived last night with a copious shower of rain lasting over two hours. To-day the sky is obscured, and clouds are banking up with prospects of more rain.

Lucknow, June 20.

A serious railway accident occurred this morning between two stations on this side of Allahabad on the E. I. R. line. The down express was standing at the station, when by a mistake of the pointsman the up passenger train from Allahabad ran into it. Some Europeans and several natives are reported killed and injured.

London, June 22.

A telegram received at St. Petersburg from Tabreez states that the wire to Urumia is interrupted.

At the instance of the British and Russian Consuls a commission of enquiry has been sent thither.

A message to the *Daily Telegraph* from Constantinople reports that Great Britain and Russia have made fresh representations to the Porte regarding the Kurds on the Persian frontier.

Reuter wires from Hongkong that calamitous floods have taken place on West River. Several towns have been submerged and the Samstin custom house and railway station inundated. Thousands are employed at Samstin constructing breastworks. The rice crop is totally destroyed.

Calcutta, June 22.

Last night after midnight whilst 41-Up passenger train was waiting outside the distant signal at Kankinara station, this side of Barackpore, a bomb was thrown into a second class carriage, in which were Messrs Browne and Passey, assistants in a jute mill. Both were seriously injured by the explosion, which wrecked the carriage.

Hard upon this outrage comes news that the French authorities at Chandernagore have arrived and made over to the British authorities Babucharuray Gupta, B. A., as being actively concerned in the Manicktollah bomb factory. He is alleged to have been concerned in the attempt to blow up the Maire of Chandernagore.

London, June 23.

A son was born to the Queen of Spain this morning.

King Alfonso learning that a criminal was to be executed at Cordova this morning, telegraphed a pardon to commemorate the birth of his son.

Reuter wires from Teheran that Cossacks surrounded the Parliament to-day and demanded the surrender of certain members. Parliament refused, and fighting ensued and some of the Cossacks were killed, whereupon reinforcements with artillery arrived and fighting lasted another hour.

An Englishman named Clark Kennedy has been captured by tribesmen outside Tetuan and is held to ransom.

After Kaid Maclean's capture the Foreign Office published a warning to Englishman to avoid risks as the Government would ransom no more captives.

Gloucester has beaten Somerset by six wickets.

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